



To: Interested Parties
From: Whit Ayres, Jon McHenry and Dan Judy
Date: August 12, 2010
Re: The State of the WV 03 Race

Our polling, conducted for American Action Forum on July 28, 29, 31, and August 1, with 400 likely general election voters, shows Representative Nick Rahall with a comfortable lead over the lesser-known Spike Maynard. Rahall has 97 percent name recognition, compared to Maynard's 72 percent, and leads on the ballot by a 53 to 37 percent margin.

Beyond the ballot test, the key results from the survey are:

1. The economy is the most important issue, followed by making Washington more accountable. In response to an open-ended question, 44 percent of voters name the economy as the most important issue. When presented with seven options in a closed-ended question, 25 percent of voters say *"creating new jobs"* is most likely to affect their vote for Congress, 23 percent say *"making Washington, DC more accountable,"* and 18 percent say *"controlling government spending."*

2. Voters identify several of the positive characteristics tested with Maynard. Voters say *"will fight to keep taxes low"* (32 to 29 percent), *"will work to get government spending under control"* (32 to 30 percent), and *"has new ideas that will change our country for the better"* (31 to 27 percent) better describe Maynard than Rahall.

The better-known and more popular Rahall has the advantage on *"will promote policies that are good for the economy"* (36 to 30 percent), *"is honest and trustworthy"* (34 to 19 percent), and *"will do the right thing to fix the health care reform bill"* (32 to 29 percent).

3. Rahall's support for ObamaCare and votes for bailouts are his greatest tested weaknesses. Fifty-one percent of voters are much less likely to support him because *"he initially said he wouldn't vote for the health care bill because it would allow publicly-funded abortions, but changed his vote to support it under pressure from Nancy Pelosi"* (15 percent are somewhat less likely to support him, and 28 percent say it has no effect on their vote), and another 51 percent are much less likely to support him because *"he voted in favor of bailouts for Wall Street and the housing industry, which could cost taxpayers over a trillion dollars"* (19 percent say somewhat less likely, 25 percent say no real effect). Voters in this district oppose the health care legislation by a 56 to 32 percent margin.

4. Majorities of voters in this district view Barack Obama and Nancy Pelosi unfavorably. President Obama draws a 36 to 59 percent favorable to unfavorable rating, while Speaker Pelosi draws a 23 to 59 percent rating.

Methodology

All respondents were selected randomly from a list of registered voters in the district, and indicated they are likely to vote in the elections for Congress this fall, and interviews were conducted by live interviewers. Quotas were set by gender, age, and county consistent with past participation. The margin of error is ± 4.90 percent when respondents split evenly on a question.